

Other Cemeteries



Airplane headstone, above, and angel, at right, are just of few of the sculptured tributes at the Hope Cemetery in Barre, Vermont.

Vermont's Hope Cemetery a shrine to stonecutters' lives and livelihood

By Chris Hicks
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BARRE, Vt. — Walk past the giant cube on a pedestal, the soccer ball, the single engine airplane and the midget racing car (with "No. 61" emblazoned on the door) and you'll find the twin-bed granite coffins, joined by a king-sized headboard.

Depicted on the headboard are a man and woman, sitting up and facing each other with arms outstretched and hands clasped. Between them are the words, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, for love is strong as death" (from the Song of Solomon 8:6).

Welcome to Vermont's famed Hope Cemetery, located on Merchant Street (Route 14) just north of Barre.

Some may see it as overly sentimental or cloying, ridiculously flamboyant or even kitsch, but to refer to the rows and rows of monuments as merely "a cemetery" seems to diminish the artistry of stonecutters who work the nearby granite quarries.

"The Hope," as locals refer to it, is nothing less than an outdoor museum, a gallery of granite, with sculpture tributes to loved ones that appear to have escalated into something of a carving competition.

And to say that it's an eye-catching display is to understate.

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It's rather late in the afternoon on this crisp, clear day in early October. Our party — five Utahns on the last leg of a two-week trip in a rented van, a vacation sojourn on the lookout for New

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